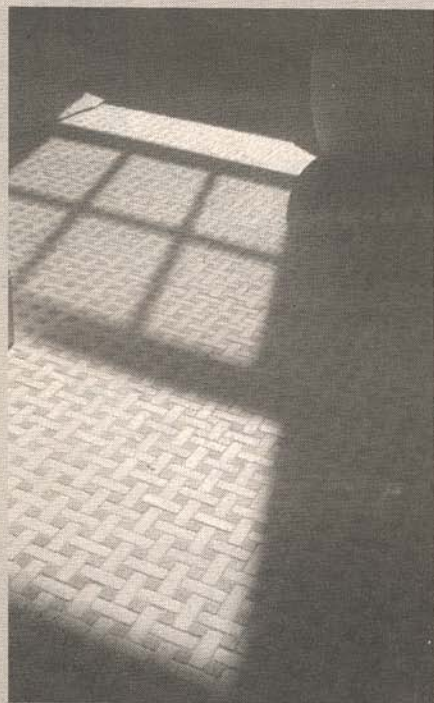


## What's a mud room for, after all?



We enter with our wet and dirty outerwear. Our children and pets enter and leave dozens of times a day, each time depositing tangible memories in their tracks. I'm often asked to recommend flooring materials that can stand up to this constant abuse. Happily, I can recommend several options.

Slate is one of the best choices. Select a natural color that is close to the color of the dirt or sand around your home, and use a matching, or slightly darker, grout color. Slate is a tough material that looks better with time and travel. (One of my customers on the Island will be happy to show you her magnificent slate floors, along with the big dog claws and grubby boots that regularly travel the tiles.) Maintenance is simple: vacuum regularly, wet mop when needed. The cost of slate tile ranges from \$10.00 to \$30.00 per square foot.

Tumbled marble offers a world of options in a broad range of prices. (Tumbling, like the soft finish of a polished slate floor, makes the material more slip-resistant, a good thing where floors are likely to get wet.) One of my favorite choices is a group of tumbled marble mosaic patterns, all made by a women's cooperative in India. The mosaics are gorgeous, and the women get to keep all of their profits. How good is that? These mosaics cost about \$22.00 per square foot.

Italian porcelain tiles are beautiful, long-lasting, and surprisingly affordable. Rather than having a glazed surface that eventually wears off, porcelain tiles are the same color throughout. I carry a wide selection of this product because it is enormously popular. Several new homes on the Island feature floors that are mostly Italian porcelain, with costly marble tiles used as decorative accents. A matte finish porcelain is best for mud rooms, and will average about \$8.00 per square foot.

The Weatherly Tile & Stone showroom, located at 3030 East Main Road, Portsmouth, Rhode Island, displays natural stone and specialty tile products, including the largest selection of glass products in New England. Owner Gaye Weatherly comments, "Bringing the serenity of the surrounding water, sky, and beach areas inside is of particular importance to me, as is incorporating simplicity and classicism in design. My selection of granites, marbles, stones, and tiles is intended to enhance our local lifestyles and architectural designs, and cannot be not found elsewhere."

**Weatherly Tile & Stone, Inc.**

401-683-5577

Open - Tuesday - Saturday